



## **Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks**

Region 1  
490 N. Meridian Road  
Kalispell, MT 59901

### **DECISION NOTICE FARM LEASE EXTENSION NORTH SHORE OF FLATHEAD LAKE**

**JULY 21, 2015**

#### **Description of the Proposed Action**

North Shore State Park/Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and North Shore WMA are managed to conserve and enhance habitats that provide forage and habitat for migratory waterfowl, while also benefiting a variety of nongame wildlife, and to promote public hunting and other compatible wildlife-related recreational opportunities.

To address these goals, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) contracts with local farmers to plant and manage grain on the two properties. These contracts allow FWP, at no cost to the agency, to create vital food resources for migratory waterfowl moving through the Flathead Valley.

FWP proposes to accept the Farm Lease Extension North Shore of Flathead Lake as final.

#### **Public Involvement**

The Farm Lease Extension North Shore of Flathead Lake Draft Environmental Assessment was released for a 14-day public comment period on July 6, 2015.

#### **Summary of Public Comments**

FWP received 6 comments for the Farm Lease Extension North Shore of Flathead Lake. Five comments supported the extension of the farming contracts. One comment did not pertain to the farm lease extension, but pertained to osprey mortality from bailing twine in osprey nests. Bailing twine is not used on the North Shore State Park/WMA or the North Shore WMA. FWP contacted the individual directly to discuss an upcoming project regarding the removal of bailing twine from osprey nests across the Flathead Valley. The individual offered to volunteer his time to help with that project. The remaining 5 comments focused on the importance of responsible land management, stewardship and weed control through farming, continued suitability of properties as waterfowl habitat, providing food for wildlife, and fence maintenance. FWP received no comments against extending the farming lease contracts on the North Shore State Park/WMA and North Shore WMA.

## FWP FINAL DECISION

In reviewing all the public comments and other relevant information, and evaluating the environmental effects, I hereby recommend the Commission approve the farm lease extensions on the North Shore of Flathead Lake.

FWP believes extension of these farming leases is in the best interest of waterfowl conservation in the Flathead Valley. It will also provide opportunities to manage and improve habitat for wildlife, and it will provide recreational opportunities for the public.



*for*  
Jim Williams  
Regional Supervisor

7/22/15  
Date